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ABSTRACT

The committee that produced this report was asked to examine two major concerns: (1) that criteria for participating in various extracurricular activities were inconsistent between schools; and (2) that criteria for participating in all extracurricular activities (including athletics) contribute to the overall mission of teaching and learning in Jackson (Mississippi) public schools. Accordingly, this final report begins with a brief review of the literature on criteria for extracurricular activities, followed by selected testimony on this topic from Jackson citizens and from school personnel. The subsequent section reports committee findings with respect to: (1) the number, percent, and rank of students participating in extracurricular activities at each secondary school in the district; (2) most and least available extracurricular activities in the secondary schools; (3) current criteria for participation per school and by district policy; (4) criteria for participation in selected states; and (5) criteria for participation in athletics as set forth by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA). The final section provides the committee's recommendations for specific actions to be take by the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent of Schools regarding participation criteria, along with concluding remarks. Appended are a list of extracurricular activities in the district, a note on averaging summer school grades with second semester grades, and a sample form for reporting student eligibility. (TE)

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REPORT OF
AD HOC DISTRICTWIDE SHARED GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
TO STUDY CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Jackson Municipal Separate School District
Robert N. Fortenberry
Superintendent

EA 018 372

Jackson, Mississippi
August 1985

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To Study Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities
in the Secondary Schools

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Delores Walker

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Appointed Members

Linda Buford

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JACKSON MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Jackson, Mississippi

Report of Ad Hoc Districtwide Shared Governance Committee To Study Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities in the Secondary Schools

Background

On May 6, 1985, an ad hoc districtwide committee on extra-curricular activities held its organizing meeting. As charged by Superintendent Robert N. Fortenberry, the committee was asked to examine two major concerns:

(1) that criteria for participating in various extra-curricular activities were perceived to be inconsistent from school to school resulting in public misunderstanding (for example, criteria for participation as a school cheerleader)

and

(2) that criteria for participating in all extra-curricular activities (including athletics) contribute to the overall mission of teaching and learning in the Jackson Public Schools.

The Superintendent made no suggestion as to the outcomes of the committee's deliberations. He did, however, offer the total assistance of his office and noted that "this committee assignment is of utmost importance and has far-reaching implications."

At the organizing meeting, committee chairperson Gary Mathews welcomed members of the committee consisting of parents, teachers, principals, and central office staff. He noted that since publication of A Nation At Risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) and other national reports on the state of American education, there has been a move afoot to look at the role of extra-curricular activities in schools. In this context, the committee chairperson posed the following questions:

-- Do extra-curricular activities contribute to the pursuit of what the National Commission on Excellence in Education dubbed the "new basics" (i.e., English, social studies, science, mathematics, and computer science)?

-- Do extra-curricular activities work against such pursuits (of the "new basics") by gaining priority over them?

-- Are extra-curriculars indeed "extra" (i.e., "outside" the curriculum) or are they "co-curricular" (i.e., of equal importance in institutions of learning)?

-- Are extra-curriculars a "right" or a "privilege"?

-- Regardless of whether extra-curriculars are a right or privilege, what are sensible requirements or criteria for participation in extra-curricular (or co-curricular) activities?

The ad hoc committee on secondary extra-curricular activities has attempted to adhere to the principles put forth in its organizing meeting: (a) to be as objective as possible, (b) to be advocates of school policy contributing to the education of all children, and (c) to be as concrete as possible regarding recommendations to the Board of Trustees and Superintendent of Schools.

Literature

Using the descriptors extra-curricular activities, student participation, and criteria for extra-curricular activities, a computer search of ERIC (the complete data base of educational materials collected by the Educational Resources Information Center) revealed a total of 70 documents consisting of journals, papers, books, etc. A synthesis of the most relevant of these reveals difficulty with extra-curriculars in the areas of budgeting and fund-raising activities, scheduling activities so as not to interfere with instructional time, recruiting activity sponsors, and getting students involved in school activities.

In one study of extra-curricular activities conducted in several states, it was found that student participation varied widely from 10% to 75% of the students in a school ("A Model for Student Activity Programs: A Survey of Student Activity Programs in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas," Vonberg et al., 1981). (See relevant data for secondary schools in JMSSD in the section on Findings.) In this same study, it was found that the most available activities were student council (100% of the 102 responding schools), music organizations (99%), and interscholastic athletics (98%); intramural athletics were least available (48.5%). (See section on Findings for JMSSD data.)

In a recent national study released by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Ernest Boyer (High School, 1983) reported:

> Nationwide, 53% of all students do not participate in any nonvarsity or athletic activity; 85% do not belong to pep clubs or take part in cheerleading, debating, or drama; more than 80% do not participate in either student government or the school newspaper; and over 78% are not members of chorus or dance, or band or orchestra activities. (p. 207)

A review of current popular literature ranges from Benedict et al. (1984):

> It is unthinkable that a "C" average required for athletic participation be applied to boys and girls that do not have a God-given ability to earn "C"s. (Interscholastic Athletic Administrator, Summer 1984)

to comments from newspaper columnist William Raspberry, who states:

> I support the C-average rule (for participation in extra-curricular activities) partly because of my assumption that it isn't all that tough a standard. We're not talking here about bell-shaped curves that automatically place some students above

> the median and some below it. I suspect we're talking less about acceptable academic achievement than about acceptable levels of exertion. (Editorial, The Clarion-Ledger, 1985)

Other comments on strengthened criteria for extra-curricular participation range from those of a vice-president of a Texas coaches' group:

> I think teachers are going to have more problems in the classroom with bitter students. Teachers may begin adjusting their grades. (American-Statesman, undated Texas newspaper article)

to editorials of Jackson's Clarion-Ledger:

> For one thing, they (academic requirements) provide a great incentive for student-athletes--and students desiring to participate in any extra-curricular activity--to study. For another, they teach something not in textbooks--personal responsibility. When students go into the world of work, it's unlikely that any employer will wink at their deficiencies or tolerate substandard performance. What better place to learn that (than) in school, if not at home? (Editorial, Summer 1985)

and comments from the Jackson Daily News:

> The NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) also is considering imposing stricter academic guidelines for athletes, but those won't be as rigorous as the requirements in Mississippi . . . . Mississippi will require prospective college students to successfully complete college preparatory courses in the "core curriculum" such as Algebra I and II and geometry, and biology, chemistry or physics. The NCAA, in its . . . Proposal 48, calls for an overall "C" grade average . . . ("Entrance Requirements Worry College Coaches," June 9, 1985)

The shared governance committee also collected and reviewed literature from the state departments of education in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana, and Texas. A report of these data is found in the section on Findings.

Testimony

The committee actively sought the opinions of Jackson citizenry and concerned members of the Jackson Public Schools. As the result of notices placed in The Clarion-Ledger, Jackson Daily News, and The Northside Sun, nine citizens phoned the committee chairperson to give input on the matter of criteria for extra-curricular participation. Each caller expressed a desire for anonymity. Like the literature in the section above labeled Literature, the opinions were divided ranging from "Extra-curriculars are for everybody regardless of grades," to "It's about time the school district raised standards for extra-curriculars!" One parent expressed a desire to give testimony before the committee, but failed to appear on the appointed date.

Within the school system, the committee heard opinions and concerns from the following:

Dan Merritt, Deputy Superintendent for Instruction
Reuben Dilworth, Assistant Superintendent for Junior High Schools
John McCarty, Assistant Superintendent for Senior High Schools
W. C. "Pop" Allen, Director of Athletics
James Hawkins, Choir Director, Blackburn Junior High School
Wayne Miller, Band Director, Whitten Junior High School
Jacqueline Mohle, Cheerleader Sponsor, Callaway High School
Mattie Weathers, Drill Team Sponsor, Murrah High School

Comments from the above individuals included (but are not limited to):

-- "all activities should be under some requirements like athletics"

-- "phase in any new requirements"

-- "grades are important"

-- "make sure we're looking at an overall average across all courses, not a certain average in each course"

-- "should standards be different for athletics and other activities"

-- "consider the exceptional education student when raising standards for extra-curricular activities"

-- "what about a probationary period for students not meeting academic requirements"

-- "minimum average of 70 should be used; folks with an 'F' shouldn't participate"

-- "include citizenship as a criterion for participating in extra-curricular activities"

-- "require a 'C' average in all subjects"

-- "selection process for cheerleaders should be thought about"

-- "cost of uniforms for cheerleaders and drill teams should be limited"

-- "how much time should cheerleaders practice"

In addition to the input obtained from the general public and members of the school district, the committee also heard testimony from two consultants: Dr. Jack Davidson, Superintendent, Tyler (TX) Independent School District, and James Wood, teacher-coach at Southwest High School, Forth Worth (TX) Independent School District. These consultants were sought because of the national attention afforded the state of Texas' "No Pass-No Play" rule. A summary of the remarks of each follows:

Dr. Jack Davidson

-- House Bill 72 was passed by a special session of the Texas Legislature during the Summer of 1984. Included in the bill was a section relating to extra-curricular activities. The law, currently in effect, states that any student, other than a mentally retarded student, shall be suspended from participation in any extra-curricular activity during the grading period in which the student received a grade lower than the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100 in any class.

-- Since another portion of HB72 mandated that grading periods for all districts in the state would be six weeks, and that numerical grades would be given in all subjects, a student would thus be ineligible for a period of six weeks if he/she received a failing grade on his/her report card.

-- Students (in Tyler) appear to be adjusting well. Grade checks have been a part of the eligibility for years.

-- We (in Tyler) have had anywhere from 15-20% of our students declared scholastically ineligible. . . . and athletics in Tyler has suffered very little effect. The greatest number of ineligible students has occurred in band and choral (music).

-- For the most part, students (in Tyler) have made the necessary adjustments to meet requirements and remained eligible.

-- Minority students in Tyler ISD have maintained their eligibility as well as students in the majority.

-- Developing your own rules and regulations and procedures (in JMSSD) is a strategic move on your part prior to having some determination made for you by a state agency. If events in Texas and other states are any indication, the movement regarding state intervention in extracurriculars will continue to accelerate.

(taken from document submitted to shared governance committee, 6/3/85)

James Wood

-- As a teacher and a coach, I believe in an overall "C" average in order to participate in extra-curricular activities; I do not believe a student should have to make a "C" in every course such as now the case in Texas.

-- Kids who participate in extra-curriculars are often the "backbone of the school." Every now and then, even one of them will slip up and make less than 70 in a course, for example, Algebra II. I don't think it is fair to penalize such a student.

Wood cont'd

-- California started the "C" average business some years ago, but it isn't a C in every course I don't think. I do not think HB72 in Texas is fair, but I do believe in higher standards.

-- An overall "C" average seems fair and reasonable. A kid has the right to fail every now and then without us adults dishing out more punishment. Failure in itself is more than enough for most!

Findings

Findings reported in this section are divided into (a) number, percent, and rank of students participating in extra-curricular activities per each secondary school (7-12) in JMSSD, (b) most/least available extra-curricular activities in secondary schools of JMSSD, (c) current criteria for participation in extra-curricular activities per school and by district policy, (d) criteria for participation in extra-curricular activities in selected states, and (e) criteria for participation in extra-curricular activities in Mississippi.

Number, Percent, and Rank of Students Participating in Extra-Curricular Activities Per Each Secondary School (7-12) in JMSSD

Note: % of Pupils in Extra-Curricular Activities is determined by dividing # Pupils in Extra-Curricular Activities by # Pupils Enrolled in School

School	# Pupils Enrolled in School	# Pupils in Extra-Cur. Activities	% Pupils in Extra-Cur. Activities	Rank in Participation by % Among Schools by Division
JR. HIGHS:				
Bailey	380	401	105%	2
Blackburn	796	542	68%	8
Brinkley	802	653	81%	6
Chastain	740	549	74%	7
Hardy	915	571	62%	10
Peeples	762	*1,250	164%	1
Powell	1,109	804	72%	9
Rowan	339	291	86%	4
Siwell	685	566	83%	5
Whitten	638	645	101%	3

*638 students participate in intramurals at Peeples Junior High School

Number, Percent, and Rank of Students in
Extra-Curricular Activities Per Each Secondary School (7-12) in JMSSD cont'd

School	# Pupils Enrolled in School	# Pupils in Extra-Cur. Activities	% Pupils in Extra-Cur. Activities	Rank in Participation by % Among Schools by Division
SR. HIGHS:				
Callaway	1,103	892	81%	5
F. Hill	755	1,451	192%	1
J. Hill	618	696	113%	3
Lanier	725	751	104%	4
Murrah	949	600	63%	7
Provine	1,120	1,550	138%	2
Wingfield	752	524	70%	6

Note: Secondary Alternative School (grades 7-10, SY 84-85) is not shown in the above table nor the one on page 6. Extra-curricular activities are evolving at this new school in JMSSD with many extra-curricular activities being introduced in the upcoming 1985-86 school year.

The above data are for school year 1984-85. Data collection was the result of a survey turned in by school principals at the request of the Shared Governance Committee on Secondary Extra-Curricular Activities. Activities included (but are not limited to): interscholastic athletics, student government, National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, annual staff, newspaper, literary magazine, FBLA, drama club, marching band, choir, cheerleaders, pep squad, flag and rifle corps, intramural athletics, Challenge Bowl, safety club, DECA, Junior Classical League, HERO, Black History Club, Spanish Honor Society, FHA, Class Capers, Junior Achievement, library club, Great Books Club, computer club, etc.

Most/Least Available Extra-Curricular Activities in Secondary Schools of JMSSD

According to the survey mentioned in the above paragraph, the most available extra-curricular activities in the secondary schools of the Jackson Municipal Separate School District are interscholastic athletics (100% of 17 schools; 100% of 18 schools with inclusion of the Secondary Alternative School in 1985-86), student government (100%), school newspaper (100%), marching band (100%), choir (100%), and the National Honor Society (100%).

Among the least available extra-curricular activities in JMSSD are intramural athletics (4 of 7 senior highs offer intramurals; 1 of 10 junior highs offer intramurals).

Current Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities Per School and by District Policy

Note: The data below were compiled from written school policies on extra-curricular activities as collected from principals by the Assistant Superintendents for Junior and Senior High Schools

PER SCHOOL (Junior Highs):

Bailey	Drill Team, C+ avg. preceding and during time drill team is active
Blackburn	Drill Team, C avg. throughout school year
Brinkley	Drill Team, C avg./Student Council, member 2.0 (C) avg.; President and Vice-President, 3.0 (B) avg.; Sec.-Treas., 2.5 (C+) avg./Cheerleaders, maintain a C avg./Junior Historical Society, C+ avg., C+ avg. in History
Chastain	Cheerleaders, C avg. in each subject/Student Council, C avg. in each subject
Hardy	Drill Team, 75 (C) avg.
Peeples	Drill Team, C avg./Cheerleaders, C avg./Student Council, newspaper, annual staff, C avg./Chess Club, enrollment in gifted program
Powell	Cheerleaders, C avg./Drill Team, B avg. preceding and during time drill team is active/Student Council, C avg.; Officers, B avg./Annual, C avg./Safety Council, C avg. with no Fs/Newspaper, High Honor Roll for editors
Rowan	for Group Membership -- passing grades in each class
Siwell	Newspaper and annual staff, 2.5 (C+) avg./Chess Team, 2.5 (C+) avg./Student Council, overall avg. of B/ Drill Team, at least a C avg. preceding and during time drill team is active
Whitten	Art Club, B avg./Cheerleaders, 2.0 (C) avg./Chess Club, any student with interest and is willing to attend weekly practices/Drill Team, 2.0 (C) avg./Newspaper and annual staff, 2.0 (C) avg./Student Council, 2.5 (C+) avg.

PER SCHOOL (Senior Highs):

Callaway	Cheerleaders, maintain overall C avg./Drill Team, overall C avg./Flag and Rifle Corps, overall C avg.
F. Hill	Cheerleaders, C avg. to qualify; maintain a 3.0 (B) avg. during school year; "A girl may be kept from performing as a result of poor grades. This will be left to the discretion of the sponsor."/Drill Team, overall C avg. in academic courses only

Current Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities Per School and by District Policy cont'd

PER SCHOOL (Senior Highs):

J. Hill	Class officers, cheerleaders, C avg./Drill Team, C avg. in academic courses only/Student Council President and V.P., B avg.; other student council officers, C avg.
Lanier	Flag and Rifle Corps, drill team, cheerleaders, C avg.
Murrah	Cheerleaders, overall C avg. and C in major subjects/ Drill Team, overall C during entire school year
Provine	Cheerleaders, 75 (C) avg. in each course/Student Body Officers, at least a B avg. inclusive of 9th grade
Wingfield	Drill Team, C in each course to try out or stay on squad/ Student Body President, avg. of 3.0 (B)/ Cheerleaders, 2.5 (C+) to try out; 3.0 (B) avg. to remain on squad; 3.0 (B) avg. in gym class

District Policy

Policy IDG/JFD of the Jackson Municipal Separate School District reads:

> The primary purpose of co-curricular activities should be to meet those school-related interests and needs of students not provided for to a sufficient degree by the curricular program of the school. The objective of the co-curricular program should logically be related to the objectives of the overall educational program. The emphasis should be on helping the students develop the unique talents and skills they possess.

Other components of IDG/JFD address sponsoring, conflict with religious observances, evening practice, exam week, use of school day for extra-curricular activities, inter-school activities, and musical and dramatic performances.

No mention is made in Board Policy IDG/JFD of academic criteria for participation in extra-curricular or co-curricular activities.

Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities in Selected States

The following data were secured in written form from the various state departments of education in the selected states.

Florida

Statute 232.425 Student Standards for Participation in Interscholastic Extra-Curricular Activities. Beginning with the second semester of the 1983-84 school year, in order for a student to be eligible to participate in interscholastic extra-curricular activities, he must maintain a grade point average of 1.5 (D+) on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, and in the 1984-85 school year and thereafter, must pass

Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities in Selected States cont'd

Florida

five subjects for the grading period immediately preceding participation; except that, in the 1984-85 school year and thereafter, any student who is exempt from attending a full school day under s. 228.041(13) must maintain a 1.5 (D+) grade point average and pass each class for which he is enrolled. Each student must meet such other requirements for participation as may be established by the school district.

North Carolina

N.C. Administrative Code 2C.0300 Eligibility for Participation in Interscholastic Athletic Competition. Academic Requirements. A player must be enrolled a "minimum load," defined as four courses, each course meeting five periods per week and each period being at least 45 minutes in length or an equivalent amount of time for each course. A player must receive passing grades on at least four courses each semester. . . . If an athlete is "academically" eligible at the beginning of any semester, that status is retained throughout the full period of the semester. It is the responsibility of the principal to check the academic eligibility status of each athlete enrolled in the school within five days of the close of the semester . . .

According to North Carolina officials, that state does not establish criteria for participation in extra-curricular activities other than athletics as shown above. Local school districts set policy for those activities other than interscholastic athletics.

South Carolina

Section 59-39-160. South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984. To participate in interscholastic activities, students in grades nine through twelve must have passed at least four academic courses, including each unit the student takes that is required for graduation, with an overall passing average in the preceding semester. Academic courses must be defined as those courses of instruction for which credit toward high school graduation is given. These may be required or approved electives. . . . Any local school board of trustees in its discretion is authorized to impose more stringent standards than those contained in this section for participation in interscholastic activities by students in grades nine through twelve.

Virginia

Standards for Accrediting Schools in Virginia Adopted by the Board of Education, July 1983. Instructional Program, Standard B, Section 22. School-sponsored activities shall be under the direct supervision of the staff and should contribute to the educational objectives of the school. . . . They should not interfere with the individual's required instructional activities. Extra-curricular activities and eligibility requirements shall be established and approved by the superintendent and the school board.

Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities in Selected States cont'd

Louisiana

Louisiana Register, Vol. 10, No. 10, Oct. 20, 1984. Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Rule 1: Scholastic Requirements for Participation in High School Athletics. To be eligible under the scholastic rule all students, other than special education (excluding gifted and talented), enrolled in high schools (grades 9-12) must meet the requirements as indicated: (On a 4-point scale, the student must exhibit a grade point average of 1.5 (D+) in order to be eligible and pass 5 subjects (5 units).) Rule 2: A student must meet the scholastic requirements at the end of the first semester in order to be eligible for the entire second semester. Prior to the first day of the semester of a new school year or prior to the jamboree contest or first interschool game (whichever comes first), a student must meet the scholastic requirements in order to be eligible for the entire first semester.

Texas

Texas House Bill 72. Any student, other than a mentally retarded student, shall be suspended from participation in any extra-curricular activity during the grading period in which the student received a grade lower than the equivalent of 70 on a scale of 100 in any class.

As previously noted by Dr. Jack Davidson (see page 5), since another portion of Texas House Bill 72 mandated that grading periods for all districts in the state would be six weeks, and that numerical grades would be given in all subjects, a student would thus be ineligible for a period of six weeks if he/she received a failing grade on his/her report card.

Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities in Mississippi

The Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA) governs interscholastic activities of an extra-class nature. MHSAA does not provide academic criteria for extra-curricular activities with the exception of athletics. The Association's handbook (1984-85, item 2, page 24) notes:

> Special Eligibility Rules for Students Entering Athletic Contests: To be eligible for athletic competition, a student must meet the following minimum scholastic requirement: To be eligible for the current year, a student must have earned three (3) units in major subjects for the year preceding participation. . . . Major Subjects: A major subject is one that meets at least five class periods a week and carries at least one full unit of credit for the session and at least one half unit credit for the semester. Physical education, instrumental music, vocal music, debating, oratory, newspaper staff, yearbook staff, driver education, audio-visual education and 4-H Club shall not be considered major subjects. . . .

Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities in Mississippi cont'd

(Exceptions to the rule are TMR, EMR, and other students who have been tested, screened, and placed in accordance with their IEP in a Special Education Certificate Program (does not earn Carnegie units).)

The following is an example of the application of the above rule in the schools of Mississippi which abide by rules set forth by MHSAA:

Student: John Smith

Assuming that John Smith is eligible to participate in interscholastic sports upon his arrival as a tenth grader in the senior high school, consider:

10th Grade (e.g., 1985-86)
(Assume grades below are for each 9-week period)

English 10	D (1 quality pt.)
Algebra I	F (0 quality pts.)
Human Biology	F (0 quality pts.)
World History	D (1 quality pt.)
Spanish I	D (1 quality pt.)
P.E.	F (0 quality pts.)
	Total = 3 quality pts.

Overall Grade Pt. Avg. = 3÷6 or .50
(.50 is less than a 1.0, "D" avg.)

Under MHSAA rules, John Smith is eligible for interscholastic athletic competition during 1985-86 as well as the entire upcoming 1986-87 school year.

John did not attend summer school.

11th Grade (e.g., 1986-87)
(Assume grades below are for each 9-week period)

English 11	F
Applied Math	F
General Science	F
American His.	F
Spanish II	F
P.E.	F

Under MHSAA rules, John Smith is eligible for interscholastic athletic competition during 1986-87, yet he is not eligible to participate during the upcoming 1987-88 school year.

As demonstrated above, the grades earned the school year preceding the one in question are the determining bases for qualification to participate in interscholastic athletics as approved by the Mississippi High School Activities Association.

Recommendations

General Information

The Ad Hoc Districtwide Shared Governance Committee To Study Criteria for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities in the Secondary Schools has examined questions posed in the Background section of this report (pages 1-2). Consensus was reached as represented below.

Do extra-curricular activities contribute to the pursuit of what the National Commission on Excellence in Education dubbed the "new basics" (i.e., English, social studies, science, mathematics, and computer science)?

Extra-curricular activities do serve to promote the teaching and learning of the "new basics" (and other subjects) in the Jackson Public Schools. More specifically, extra-curriculars assist students in (a) developing more interest in school, (b) increasing the capacity to function as a leader and/or member of a group, (c) learning to use leisure time more constructively, and (d) gaining information not available in curricular courses. Insomuch as the preceding produce students who are interested, able to function in a class setting, who distinguish between relaxation and work, and are receptive to new knowledge, extra-curricular activities do contribute to teaching and learning.

Do extra-curricular activities work against such pursuits (of the "new basics") by gaining priority over them?

In the Jackson Public Schools, learning outcomes are clearly delineated in the district's curriculum or Common Body of Knowledge (CBOK). While extra-curricular activities are important for reasons already noted, they are secondary to the primary mission of teaching and learning the Common Body of Knowledge. No school personnel should fail to comprehend the instructional focus or mission of the school district.

Are extra-curriculars indeed "extra" (i.e., "outside" the curriculum) or are they "co-curricular" (i.e., of equal importance in institutions of learning)?

Effective Schools Research clearly suggests that academics take priority over all other activities in schools where the most learning occurs for the most children (e.g., "School Improvement Based on Effective Schools Research," paper by Lezotte & Bancroft, April 1985). Important as they may be, some activities such as those which are extra-curricular simply are not "equal" in importance to others in a school.

Are extra-curricular activities a "right" or a "privilege"?

A "right" is something that a student is entitled to by virtue of his/her classification as "student." For example, Reutter and Hamilton (The Law of Public Education, 1976) note that the courts recognize two categories of school activities: those to which the student has a right, such as the basic curriculum, and those which are "extra-curricular" (p. 556). The shared governance committee views extra-curricular activities as a "privilege"--something that is not owed to someone by virtue of the mere classification as student, but rather something that is earned through proper conduct and academic achievement. The teaching and learning mission of the Jackson Public Schools is best supported by extra-class activities' being viewed as "privileges," not rights.

Specific Actions

Below are recommendations for specific actions to be taken by the Board of Trustees of the Jackson Municipal Separate School District and Superintendent of Schools as regards criteria for participation in extra-curricular activities in the secondary schools (grades 7-12).

1. AMEND JMSSD BOARD POLICY IDG/JFD TO REPLACE THE TERM "CO-CURRICULAR" WHEREVER IT APPEARS WITH THE TERM "EXTRA-CURRICULAR." (See page 9 of this report for policy IDG/JFD.)

2. ESTABLISH DISTRICTWIDE ELIGIBILITY RULES REGARDING STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN ALL EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES. (See Appendix A for a List of Extra-Curricular Activities, JMSSD.) These eligibility requirements entail the following academic and citizenship criteria:

   Academic

   (a) For students in grades 7 and 8, to be eligible for extra-curricular activities for the current semester, a student must have an overall average of 75 (C) and must be passing in at least three (3) major subjects for the semester preceding participation (with the exception of incoming seventh graders who will be eligible during their first semester as the result of being promoted from the elementary school). (Major Subject: one that meets at least five class periods per week; As a required subject for grades 7 and 8, physical education shall be considered a major subject even though these classes do not always meet five periods per week.)

   (b) For students in grades 9 through 12, to be eligible for extra-curricular activities for the current semester, a student must have an overall average of 75 (C) and must be passing three (3) units in major subjects for the semester preceding participation. (Incoming ninth graders will be eligible during their first semester as the result of having an overall average of 75 and passing in at least three major subjects for the second semester of the eighth grade.) (Major Subject: one that meets at least five class periods per week and carries a minimum one full unit of credit for the school year and a minimum one-half unit of credit for the semester. For grades 9-12, the following shall not be considered major subjects: physical education, instrumental music, vocal music, debating, oratory, newspaper staff, yearbook staff, driver education, audio-visual education, and 4-H Club.--These exceptions are those cited by MHSAA in its 1984-85 handbook.--However, these subjects shall be counted in the overall average in order to determine eligibility.)

   (c) Credits earned in an accredited summer school shall be considered an extension of the second semester of a school year. These credits shall be taken into consideration in determining the academic eligibility of students in grades 7-12. As regards students in grades 9 through 12, successful completion of a full unit, major subject, during a summer session shall be designated as passing one major subject for one unit of credit, but not as passing two major subjects for one-half unit each.

(c) cont'd

In computing a student's (7-12) overall average for the second semester, the numerical average earned in the summer session shall be included in the overall computation. (See Appendix B.)

(d) Accredited correspondence courses may be accepted for establishing extra-curricular eligibility, provided the course has been completed and recorded by the opening of school. (See page 9 of Evaluating and Reporting Student Progress, Secondary Level, Revised 1984, JMSSD, for numerical value of final grade.)

(e) If a student who is eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities during a particular semester drops out of school for one or more semesters, he or she is then ineligible until he/she passes three major subjects and has an overall average of 75 (C) during a semester. A student who qualifies for participation in extra-curricular activities for a particular semester cannot drop out of school for one or more semesters and then be eligible for the next semester he/she returns to school.

(f) The following are EXCEPTIONS to the previously stated academic criteria (pages 14 and 15):

-- Students who have been tested, screened, and placed in a TMR or EMR special education program

-- Students who have been tested, screened, and placed in keeping with their IEP in a Special Education Certificate Program

-- Students ruled eligible as the result of the previously stated criteria (i.e., TMR, EMR, IEP) are to be assigned a date of entering the ninth grade by the Director of Athletics or his designee corresponding to other students of that age for the purpose of participating in interscholastic athletics

-- SLD (Specific Learning Disability) students shall be exempt from the overall average of 75 criteria, but must comply with current MHSAA standards if pursuing a regular diploma

-- Students who participate in extra-curricular activities for which membership requirements extend beyond those outlined herein shall abide by such extra-agent criteria (for example, academic average to qualify a student for participation in the National Honor Society)

-- A transfer student entering the Jackson Public Schools whose overall average is less than "C" for the semester preceding entry into the school district shall be placed on "probation" for a period of nine weeks. At the end of his or her first full nine weeks (i.e., grading term) during which he/she will be able to participate in extra-curriculars, the student would have to exhibit an overall average of 75 (C) and must be passing three units in major subjects in order to continue eligibility for the semester.

(g) The sponsor within a school who is responsible for any extra-curricular activity shall complete a Report of Student Eligibility

(g) cont'd

to participate in Extra-Curricular Activities form at the end of each semester (See Appendix C) beginning with the end of the second semester of the 1985-86 school year. (This form will be completed no later than 5 days following the dissemination of pupil appraisals.) The form shall be turned in to the principal who shall verify its accuracy by signing the document and keeping it on file in a location so designated by the principal. The sponsor of the extra-curricular activity shall also sign the form. As regards the Eligibility List(s) for participation in interscholastic athletics as required by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA), sponsors/coaches of these activities will turn in the necessary forms to the Director of Athletics as has been customary. Students whose names will appear on the MHSAA eligibility lists, however, will qualify for these lists only as they meet the academic criteria established herein by the Jackson Municipal Separate School District. In addition to the MHSAA eligibility forms, sponsors/coaches of interscholastic athletic teams will report the eligibility of student-athletes by semester by using the form shown in Appendix C.

Citizenship

To be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities, a student must exhibit acceptable conduct and citizenship standards. "Acceptable conduct and citizenship standards" shall be defined in the local school by the individual sponsors of extra-curricular activities in cooperation with the principal. Recognition of acceptable academic performance as well as proper conduct and citizenship should be encouraged, expected, and enforced by school officials.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF THE JACKSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

To be eligible for extra-curricular activities during the fall semester of 1986-87, a student will have to meet the criteria outlined herein for the second semester of the 1985-86 school year. Citizenship criteria, as noted above, are ongoing expectations at all times during every school year and every semester.

3. CONVENE A COMMITTEE OF ALL JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH CHEERLEADER SPONSORS AS WELL AS A COMMITTEE OF ALL JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH DRILL TEAM SPONSORS TO ESTABLISH DISTRICTWIDE STANDARDS AS REGARDS (A) PRICE RANGE AND NUMBERS OF INDIVIDUAL UNIFORMS, (B) METHOD OF SELECTION/ELECTION TO SQUADS, AND (C) TIME OF SELECTION/ELECTION PROCESS. Each committee is to report to the Superintendent's designee(s) no later than Monday, December 2, 1985. The new standards shall be implemented beginning the second semester of the 1985-86 school year.

Concluding Remarks

The Ad Hoc Districtwide Shared Governance Committee on Extra-Curricular Activities in the Secondary Schools strongly commends the recommendations found in this report to the Board of Trustees and Superintendent of Schools of the Jackson Municipal Separate School District.

Committee members believe that through the acceptance and implementation of their recommendations, both equity and excellence will be served.

Equity will be served in that:

> criteria for participating in various extra-curricular activities will be consistent from school to school resulting in greater public understanding and acceptance.

Excellence will be served in that:

> criteria for participating in all extra-curricular activities will contribute to the overall mission of teaching and learning in the Jackson Public Schools.

Equity for all students is promoted when standards are held high, but realistic, for attendees of every school. Differentiated standards for participation in extra-curricular activities can only serve to exaggerate the levels of expectations for students among schools and within schools.

Excellence for all students is promoted when standards help the attendees of every school get their own priorities right: to realize that while extra-curricular activities can be a value-added adjunct to the work of the classroom, they cannot be a substitute.

The committee believes that students who attend the Jackson Public Schools, now and in the future, will be best served when we as adults provide a climate of fairness, standards, priorities, and success. To these ends, we are committed. We trust that parents, students, teachers, and administrators are so committed.

Appendix A

List of Extra-Curricular Activities
Jackson Municipal Separate School District

List of Extra-Curricular Activities
Jackson Municipal Separate School District

The extra-curricular activities below are those affected by the Academic and Citizenship criteria:

Interscholastic Athletics
Intramural Athletics
Student Council
(including all officers)
Annual Staff
Newspaper Staff
Literary Magazine
Quill and Scroll
FBLA
DECA
Drama Club
Cheerleaders
Drill Team
Flag and Rifle Corps
Challenge Bowl
Safety Club
HERO
Junior Achievement Club
Library Club
Computer Club
Band
(interscholastic competition; performances at athletic events; performances at invited functions, etc.)
Choir
(interscholastic competition; performances at out-of-class events)
Black History Club
Foreign Language Clubs

*OTHERS

*The above extra-curricular activities are not meant to be all inclusive. Should a question arise about a particular activity, the school principal will contact the Office of the Deputy Superintendent for Instruction for a ruling as regards the classification of an activity.

Appendix B

Example: Averaging Summer School Grades with Second Semester Grades to Arrive at Overall Average for the Second Semester

A Note on Determining the Overall Average for a Semester

Example: Averaging Summer School Grades with Second Semester Grades to Arrive at Overall Average for the Second Semester

Consider the following major subjects, as defined in the Academic criteria for participation in secondary extra-curricular activities, and the second semester grades for a particular student:

English 10	85
Algebra I	75
Human Biology	80
World History	82
Spanish I	40
P.E.	75

Overall avg. for Second Semester = 437÷6=72.8 = 73

This student attends summer school and takes any major subject* as defined by the Academic criteria (i.e., one that meets at least five class periods per week with the exception, in grades 9-12, of the following courses: physical education, instrumental music, vocal music, debating, oratory, newspaper staff, yearbook staff, driver education, audio-visual education, and 4-H Club). The student earns a final grade of 85 in the course during the summer.

Given the above, this student's final overall average for the second semester shall be: 85+75+80+82+40+75+85 ÷ 7 = 74.5 or 75. This student would be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities for the next fall. (Had the student's overall average been below 75, then the student would have been declared ineligible for extra-curricular activities the next fall semester.)

Note: Grades earned for successful completion of accredited correspondence courses will be averaged in the same manner as shown above for summer school. (See page 15, item (d).)

A Note on Determining the Overall Average for a Semester

In determining the overall average for a semester, the two term grades (for example, 3rd Term and 4th Term) shall be averaged together and divided by 2. (In keeping with the methods of averaging for rank-in-class and National Honor Society to cite two examples, the semester exam grade will not be included in determining the overall average for the semester for the purpose of determining eligibility for participation in secondary extra-curricular activities.)

*including a course previously failed during the second semester

Appendix C

Report of Student Eligibility to Participate
in Extra-Curricular Activities

JMSSD

School: _____ Name of Activity _____

REPORT OF STUDENT ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Student Name	Num. Avg. for Terms 1	2	*1st Sem. Avg.	Num. Avg. for Terms 3	4	*2nd Sem. Avg.

*Note: Circle the Semester Avg. if not passing 3 major subjects

Sponsor's Signature: _____ Sponsor's Signature: _____

Principal's Signature: _____ Principal's Signature: _____

1st Semester

2nd Semester

AD HOC DISTRICTWIDE SHARED GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
TO STUDY CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Mary Ann Hatter
Mattie H. Weathers
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